

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-07 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /075 W
-----100609Z 091685 /21

R 091754Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2112

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1330

FOR EUR/RPM

EO11652 GDS
TAGS PFOR NATO XJ
SUBJECT NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON SITUATION IN AFRICA SOUTH OF
THE SAHARA

REF USNATO A-113 9 MARCH 1977

1. REFAIR TRANSMITS TEXT OF NATO EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA (C-M(77)13). THIS CABLE FORWARDS PROPOSED TALKING POINTS FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S USE WHEN THE REPORT IS REVIEWED BY THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL (NAC). THE REPORT HAS NOT YET BEEN PLACED ON THE NAC AGENDA, BUT WE EXPECT IT TO BE CONSIDERED WITHIN THE NEXT THREE WEEKS. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS AND THE EXPERTS' REPORT.

2. BEGIN TEXT DRAFT TALKING POINTS:

-- IN OUR VIEW, THE REPORT RIGHTLY REFLECTS THE CONCERN OF THE EXPERTS WITH THE INCREASINGLY BLEAK PROSPECTS FOR AN EARLY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA, AND THE DESTABILIZING ROLE THAT THE SOVIET UNION CAN PLAY IN THESE AND OTHER AFRICAN REGIONS.
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-- THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THE WEST MUST SUPPORT PEACEFUL EVOLUTION IN AFRICA. AS THE EXPERTS NOTE, MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES WILL EXPECT FROM THE WEST "A MORE EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION IN THEIR SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS TO THE CONTINENT'S URGENT POLITICAL PROBLEMS" AS WELL AS INCREASED ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE UNDERSTAND THESE DESIRES AND WILL ATTEMPT TO BE RESPONSIVE.

-- IN RHODESIA, WE BELIEVE THE WEST MUST PUT ADDITIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PRESSURE ON IAN SMITH IF DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE RACES AND THE RISE TO POWER OF RADICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE AFRICAN

NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS ARE TO BE AVOIDED.

-- IN RELATION TO NAMIBIA, MY GOVERNMENT DESIRES TO INJECT NEW LIFE INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE INTEND TO DO SO THROUGH TALKS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND A NUMBER OF BLACK AFRICAN STATES.

-- WE BELIEVE THE OUTLOOK FOR SOUTH AFRICA IS FAR FROM REASSURING. DESPITE UNPRECEDENTED TURBULENCE IN THE TOWNSHIPS AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW RADICALIZED GENERATION OF BLACK POLITICAL LEADERS, THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN NO EVIDENCE THAT IT IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER MEANINGFUL AND NECESSARY STEPS TOWARDS A BASIS TRANSFORMATION OF THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM.

-- THE UNITED STATES ALSO REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INCREASING TIES BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION, ANGOLA, AND MOZAMBIQUE. ANGOLA HAS SIGNALLED A DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN ITS LINKS WITH THE WEST, BUT REMAINS EXCESSIVELY DEPENDENT ON CUBAN TROOPS. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THE POSSIBILITY THAT MOZAMBIQUE MAY TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA FOR MILITARY SUPPORT SHOULD RHODESIAN MILITARY FORCES UNDERTAKE NEW ACTIONS AGAINST RHODESIAN GUERRILLA CAMPS LOCATED IN MOZAMBIQUE. WE COULD HARDLY WELCOME SUCH MOVES BY EITHER SIDE.

11 FINALLY, WE AGREE WITH THE EXPERTS' CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS LITTLE REASON TO EXPECT ANYTHING BUT A VIOLENT PROCESS OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN ETHIOPIA FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. DESPITE THE UNREMITTING EFFORTS OF THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP, UNREST IS SPREADING
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IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND ETHIOPIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS NEIGHBORS IS WORSENING PERCEPTIBLY. GIVEN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SOMALIA AND THE POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED SOVIET INFLUENCE IN ETHIOPIA, WE WILL WISH TO WATCH THE HORN WITH CARE, AS THE EXPERTS RIGHTLY SUGGEST. END TEXT.

3. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO USE THE COUNCIL MEETING AT WHICH THE EXPERTS' REPORT IS REVIEWED TO COMMENT ON THE PODGORNÝ VISIT, THE AFRO-ARAB SUMMIT, AND THE UGANDA PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY IF IN THE WEEKS AHEAD THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN MILITARY ADVISORS IN UGANDA SHOULD BE CONFIRMED. STRAUSS-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 30-Aug-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO01330
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197703110/baaabcfm.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 9f9901b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2962201
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> MCM 20040806
Subject: SUBJECT NATO EXPERTS REPORT ON SITUATION IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, XJ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9f9901b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009